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ABSTRACT

A survey investigated the attitudes of second language learners about authentic texts, written and oral, used for language instruction. Respondents were 186 randomly-selected university students of German. The students were administered a 212-item questionnaire (the items are appended) that requested information concerning student demographic variables, previous experience with German, current enrollment level, target language country travel, and last course grade, and presented 53 scenarios. Respondents rated the scenarios on four levels: authenticity; contribution to language learning; difficulty level; and level of anxiety/enjoyment elicited. Scenario themes included reading a menu, listening to a conversation about the weather, reading a letter, listening to directions, watching the news, and reading a literary story. Each varied with respect to the number and nature of authenticity factors they contained. Analysis of survey results indicate that: (1) certain authenticity factors (immediacy, currency, medium authenticity, native inception, native reception, cue authenticity, intent authenticity, learner inclusiveness, source authenticity, initiative authenticity, setting authenticity, cultural orientation) influence perceptions of authenticity, contribution to language learning, ease/difficulty, and anxiety/enjoyment; (2) perceived authenticity and difficulty are independent of each other; and (3) correlations between authenticity, contribution to learning, ease/difficulty, and anxiety/enjoyment varied by student characteristics. Contains 15 references. (MSE)

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Learners' Perspectives on Authenticity

ED 381 000

Introduction

The use of authentic texts (written and oral) has become integral to communicative and proficiency-oriented foreign language teaching because of their essential contributions to the development of real-life linguistic (e.g. Krashen 1989; Bacon 1989; Villegas Rogers & Medley 1988) and strategic (see Swaffar 1988) skills as well as of cultural knowledge (e.g. Nostrand 1989, McGinnis & Chuanren 1992).

Despite this general acknowledgment of authentic materials as indispensable from effective foreign language instruction, several issues have persisted in the debate on how and how much to actually incorporate authentic texts into the classroom: (1) questions relating to difficulty, specifically: (a) how to assess a text's level of difficulty and the validity of Readability Scales (see Bernhardt 1983), and (b) whether to grade (modify) texts or tasks (Villegas Rogers & Medley 1988) in order to strike a balance between preserving the beneficial effects of authenticity in building communicative and strategic skills and cultural knowledge on one hand and preventing students from being daunted by randomly occurring forms and vocabulary on the other (Geddes, Marion and White 1978). (2) the question of whether students' are willing to interact with authentic texts in view of their perceived difficulty (Bacon & Finneman 1990); and (3) the definition of authenticity itself: The standard definition of authentic as "produced by native speakers for native speakers" may be both too narrow and too broad: too narrow because it essentially prevents both non-native speakers as well as highly proficient learners from ever participating in authentic discourse and too broad because it disregards issues of context, presentation and usage, such as whether originally authentic materials when inserted into a textbook for unquestionably pedagogical purposes remain so, even though information contained in these texts is essentially (i.e., in terms of information content) irrelevant to the learners. For example, non-current movie show-time schedules from a foreign city and printed in a textbook are inauthentic to the learner as far as (a) these movies by now probably are available at video-stores only and (b) even if this information were up-to-date, learners would most likely not consider movies playing thousands of miles away when planning their week-ends. Rings (1986) has addressed these issues very aptly and summarized various suggested criteria of authenticity such as: (a) medium authenticity, i.e., the rendition of spoken discourse as such rather than in written form (Johnson 1979), (b) relevance (Mollica 1979), (c) nativeness (Löschmann & Löschmann 1985), (d) content (rather than form) orientation (Dulay et al. 1982), and (e) task or goal orientation (Weijenberg 1980). Rings further suggests that situations can be ranked according to their degree of authenticity, depending on the presence or absence of certain characteristics.

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For the research project described here, I have drawn on issues relating to (a) the perceived difficulty of authentic texts, (b) authentic texts' contributions to language learning as perceived by learners, (c) learners' reluctance or eagerness to interact with authentic texts, (d) the determination of authenticity factors (i.e., characteristics which make a text more or less authentic), and (e) the question of how situations can be ranked according to their degree of authenticity. In sum, the following research questions were formulated:

1. As how authentic do learners perceive related but not identical situations according to which authenticity factors (see below) they contain?

2. How do learners rate these same situations on their: (a) contributions to learning, (b) ease or difficulty, (c) their associated level of anxiety or enjoyment?

3. How does the rating of authenticity correlate to ratings of (a) contributions to learning, (b) ease or difficulty, and (c) associated anxiety or enjoyment?

4. How do these correlations differ according to demographic variables such as (a) the current level of language learning as reflected by enrollment in a particular university foreign language (German) course, (b) gender, (c) the amount of previous language learning experience, (d) academic major, (e) language learning success as reflected by the last course grade, (f) the extent of travel experience to a target language country, and (g) age?

5. Which statistically generated factors underlie the ratings of authenticity, contribution to language learning, ease versus difficulty, and associated anxiety versus enjoyment?

Methodology

186 randomly selected students of all levels of German language at the University of X participated in the survey. Responses were anonymous but in order to analyze the responses according to demographic variables, the participants were asked to identify themselves according to the extent of their previous experience learning German, their current level of enrollment, their gender, the extent of their experience of travel to a target language country, their last course grade, and their age.

The instrument was a 212-item questionnaire which can be viewed in the appendices (Appendix A). The questionnaire was administered in class or sent home with the learners, as deemed appropriate by each course instructor. No time limit was imposed; on the contrary, the participants were told to take their time and to carefully consider their responses.

The 212 items consisted of 53 scenarios which had to be rated in four separate cycles: (1) cycle 1: How authentic do you consider each of these scenarios? (from 1 = not at all authentic to 5 = very authentic); (2) cycle 2: How much does each of these scenarios contribute to your language learning? (from 1 = contributes nothing to 5 = helps a great deal); (3) cycle 3: How difficult to handle do you consider each of these scenarios? (from 1 = very easy to 5 = very difficult); (4) cycle 4: How would you react to each of these scenarios? (from 1 = causes me much anxiety to 5 = I find it very enjoyable).

The scenarios were clustered in themes: (1) reading a menu,(2) listening to a conversation about the weather, (3) reading a letter, (4) listening to directions, (5) watching the news, and (6) reading a literary story. Within these clusters, the scenarios varied according to how many and which authenticity factors they contained. The key to which authenticity factors were present in each of the scenarios can be viewed in the appendices (Appendix B). The following authenticity factors, formulated for the purpose of this study, were used:

1. **immediacy:** non-recorded discourse, listening or watching as the discourse develops
2. **currency:** up-to-date information
3. **medium authenticity:** e.g. dialogues not presented in writing but aurally/orally
4. **native inception:** produced by a native speaker
5. **native reception:** produced for a native speaker
6. **cue authenticity:** being exposed to the and natural range of cues, e.g. watching people speak and not only listening to them speak
7. **intent authenticity:** the information stands to influence actual behavior, i.e., one reads a movie schedule because one actually wants to go to a movie
8. **inclusiveness:** learner participates; versus learner exclusiveness: learner does not participate
9. **source authenticity:** discourse appearing in its original and natural context or environment; e.g. newspaper articles not printed in a textbook,
10. **initiative authenticity:** discourse solicited by learner; instead of introduced by teacher or another party
11. **setting authenticity:** target language environment; versus non-target language environment
12. **cultural (goal) orientation:** versus linguistic (means) orientation

Results

1. Extreme Scores

The following table (Table 1) shows extreme mean scores assigned to scenarios in each of the four cycles (authenticity, contribution to learning, ease/difficulty, anxiety/enjoyment). Items (scenarios) marked (*) represent the lowest score in each cycle, those marked (**) the highest. The standards vary and are described for each cycle.

Table 1: Extreme Scores

very high		**very low**	
item	mean	item	mean
	cycle 1: authenticity		
	≥ 3.90		≤ 2.80
1	4.45**	4	2.78
32	4.13	10	2.67
37	4.11	9	2.63*
50	4.02	25	2.70
51	3.91	33	2.85
	cycle 2: contribution to language learning		
	≥ 3.80		≤ 3.20
54	3.89	57	2.86*
69	3.88	62	3.05
84	3.88	63	3.09
85	4.03**	78	3.15
88	4.03**	87	3.11
90	3.89		
103	3.87		
106	3.88		
	cycle 3: ease/difficulty		
	≥ 3.30		≤ 2.50
119	3.55	109	2.43
125	3.31	110	2.26*
126	3.37	111	2.48
157	3.62**	113	2.45

158	3.45	115	2.36
		116	2.50

cycle 4: anxiety/enjoyment

	≥ 3.50		≤ 3.05
162	3.51	170	3.02
163	3.62	182	3.03
164	3.51	196	2.81*
191	3.68**	197	3.02
194	3.54	198	2.89
203	3.55	211	2.85
204	3.51		
206	3.52		
209	3.55		

Summary

1. Native inception (factor 4) is the one factors which is clearly associated with extremely high ratings in all four rating cycles. This means that learners consider situations involving native speakers high in authenticity, contribution to learning, difficulty and enjoyment. Conversely, factor 4 was also present in all items rated particularly low on the enjoyment scale, moving towards anxiety. However, this phenomenon only occurred in listening situations (items 170-182 (listening to a conversation about the weather) and items 196-198 (listening to directions)), and in once instance related to literary stories without didactization (item 211). In contrast, items which rated extremely high on enjoyment exclusively related to reading (a menu, a letter) and to watching the news.

In sum, native inception contributes to high ratings on authenticity, contribution to learning, and difficulty. As far as enjoyment is concerned, native inception also has positive effects, with the notable exceptions of situations involving oral language under reduced-cue-circumstances (listening only) and extended literary discourse without pedagogical mitigation.

2. Interestingly, cultural orientation (factor 12) generally appeared to contribute to extremely low ratings in instances where it was not coupled with native inception (factor 4).

3. The presence of only one or no authenticity factor was associated with extremely low ratings on authenticity.

4. With regard to enjoyment, scenarios with solicited information (factor 10) generally receive higher ratings. Factor 10 was present in all but two items (164, 191) which received extremely high enjoyment ratings.

5. Items relating to "reading a menu" were rated particularly low on difficulty, which is quite different from reading a letter or reading a literary text. This may be due to several features

shared by these scenarios which go beyond issues of authenticity, such as (a.) the fact that the vocabulary is clearly embedded in one unified context which results in clear and stable (non-shifting) schemata; and (b.) simplified or absent syntactic structures.

2. Item-by-Item Correlations

In the analyses reported below, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to determine significant correlations between a given scenario's rating on authenticity and the same scenario's ratings on contribution to language learning, ease or difficulty, and anxiety or enjoyment.

a. correlations between authenticity and contributions to language learning

Statistically significant correlations were found for all scenarios, all of which were positive. All correlations were significant at a minimal level of $p < .01$, with the exception of correlations between items 14&67 and 13&66. These items were significant at $p < .05$ and related to listening to native speakers.

b. correlations between authenticity and ease or difficulty

Statistically significant positive correlations were found for the following scenarios only: 13,19,30 (all of which relate to listening to a native speaker) and 34 (reading a letter written by a classmate to issue an invitation).

Statistically non-significant negative correlations were found for the following scenarios: 2,5,6,7,8,12,15,20,22,23,24,27,28,29,35,38,45,46,49,53. These items generally shared the following characteristics: (1) listener (learner) accommodation, i.e., the scenarios described efforts to help students successfully communicate; (2) a pedagogical motivation; and (3) visual support (written materials, transcript, video). Thus, although not established at statistically significant levels, pedagogical aids, including the use of visual reinforcement, may cause situations to be rated as relatively easy while not or only marginally detracting from their authenticity.

c. correlations between authenticity and anxiety or enjoyment

Statistically significant positive correlations were determined for the following situations: 2,5,6,8,17,18, 22, 23, 26, 28, 33, 35,41,42,43,44,45,46,47,48,50,51, 52, and 53. The following common and important elements emerged:

1. All scenarios relating to visually supported TV news (recording or satellite) showed statistically significant positive correlations, with the exception of item 49 (Watching because the host family wants the learner to).
2. While scenarios 33 and 35 (both relating to reading a letter from a native speaker written to the learner) noted similar levels of enjoyment (3.4; 3.54 respectively), their rated levels of authenticity differed (2.9 versus 3.98), most likely because scenario 33 described a course assignment.
3. All statistically significant menu scenarios involved a real German menu. However, conversely, not all scenarios involving a real German menu showed statistically significant positive correlations, the distinguishing criterion (contributing to statistical significance) being an intent to learn the language.
4. Speaking to a non-native speaker on the phone and reading a transcript of a native with a non-native conversation involved both low levels of authenticity and low levels of enjoyment The low ratings of the former scenarios (listening to a native speaker) reaffirm the problematic nature of a combination of native inception and reduced cues. In addition, the only negative correlation (not significant) between authenticity and enjoyment was determined for scenario 29 which also involved listening to a native speaker.
5. While both, scenarios 22 and 23 show significant correlations, in the case of scenario 22 it is due to high ratings in both authenticity and enjoyment. In contrast, for scenario 23 it is due to relatively low ratings in both areas. The difference between the scenarios was currency (present in 22 but not in 23).
6. Scenarios 42 and 44 distinguish themselves from scenarios 41 and 43 in their being learner-initiated: while all four situations showed significant positive correlations between authenticity and enjoyment, this involves high ratings on authenticity for situations 42 and 44 as compared to low ones in situations 41 and 43, with enjoyment ratings being the highest for situation 44 which is the only one containing cultural orientation (i.e., genuine interest in the topic as opposed to pedagogical motivation). In sum, while authenticity ratings diverge on the issue of who initiated the behavior (learner versus teacher), enjoyment ratings diverge on the issue of genuine versus pedagogically-driven interest.

scenario	authenticity	enjoyment	correlation coeff.
41	3.45	3.28	.2483
42	3.81	3.28	.2779
43	3.31	3.23	.2343
44	3.82	3.55	.2522

7. For scenarios involving watching current news, two (46, 49) received exceptionally low ratings on authenticity. Both involve a lack of learner-initiative. However, only 49 failed to show a significant correlation between authenticity and enjoyment. This is probably attributable to scenarios 49's even further dip in its enjoyment ratings. Scenario 46 is initiated by the teacher, 49 by a host family. Thus while the issue of initiative plays a role in ratings of authenticity, the ratings of enjoyment further diverge on who, besides the learner, initiates a situation. Apparently, students trust educational professionals more than hosts in the target language country when it comes to the selection of appropriate materials. Finally, scenario 50, containing the most authenticity factors of the cluster was rated the highest on authenticity and enjoyment.

situation	authenticity	enjoyment	correlation coeff.
45	3.84	3.51	.1535
46	3.56	3.32	.2111
47	3.78	3.52	.2295
48	3.64	3.38	.1972
49	3.52	3.18	.1431 (n.s.)
50	4.03	3.56	.2317

8. For all items referring to literary stories significant correlations were found. However, some further distinctions are necessary: Literary texts published in literary books were considered more authentic by app. 0.5 point than those published in textbooks. In contrast, as far as enjoyment ratings are concerned, literary stories (published in a textbook) which are accompanied by glossaries were rated nearly 0.5 higher than literary stories published without glossaries, whether in a textbook or not. In sum, authenticity hinges more strongly on the source in which a text is delivered while enjoyment rises with didactization.

A quick comparison to ratings of contributions to learning shows that again, texts accompanied by glossaries are rated higher. The text rated the lowest was

the one appearing in a textbook without a glossary, while the one published in a literary book, also without a glossary, held a medium rating. Thus, contribution to learning appears to primarily be evaluated based on didactization and secondarily on source authenticity.

scenario	authenticity	contribution	enjoyment (=corr.coeff.)
51	3.91	3.61 (.4027)	3.07 (.1882)
52	3.41	3.40 (.2855)	2.85 (.2816)
53	3.59	3.88 (.1995)	3.38 (.2690)

3. Correlations by Mean Sums

In the analyses reported below, Pearson correlation coefficients were computed to determine significant correlations between the mean sum of authenticity ratings on all 53 scenarios, assigned by a particular demographic group and the mean sums of (a.) ratings of contributions to learning (Table 3), (b.) ratings of ease or difficulty (Table 4); and (c.) ratings of anxiety or enjoyment (Table 5), each assigned by the same respective demographic groups. Levels of statistical significance are indicated as follows: *** = $p < .001$; ** = $p < .01$; * = $p < .05$; n.s.= non-significant.

The demographic groups were configured as follows: (a.) level of German: 1 = First Year, 2 = Second Year, 3 = Third & Fourth Year; (b.) gender; (c.) previous German class: high school, First Year, Second Year; (d.) intended or declared academic major: language; political science, business, history; chemistry, engineering; and other; (d.) last grade: A, AB (an official intermediate grade); B, BC, or C; and D&F; (e.) extent of travel to a country in which the target language (German) is spoken: none, one month or less, 1 year or less, more than 1 year; and (f.) age: 18 years or younger, 23 years or younger, older than 23.

The table right below (Table 2) shows the mean sum ratings of authenticity by demographic groups to which the other mean sums (referring to the contributions to learning, ease or difficulty, and anxiety or enjoyment) will be related.

Table 2: Authenticity Ratings by Demographic Group and Mean Sums

demographic variable	cases	mean sum	SD
level 1	89	187.55	30.60
level 2	73	188.05	36.79
level 3	23	189.30	35.59

male	89	184.29	30.71
female	94	191.37	29.76
last German class High School	22	184.50	28.79
last German class level 1	140	190.35	29.88
last German class level 2	4	192.50	20.40
major language	12	202.08	31.67
major polisci, bus.,hist.	43	182.81	30.01
major chem., engin.	25	182.56	28.87
major other	97	189.40	30.36
last grade A,AB	82	188.64	28.81
last grade B,BC,C	78	189.64	31.79
last grade D,F	5	179.20	15.06
travel none	115	186.01	30.16
travel 1 month -	53	187.94	31.58
travel 1 year -	13	207.77	19.04
travel 1 year +	5	182.20	26.51
age 18 -	15	177.47	26.88
age 23 -	131	189.56	29.12
age 23 +	38	185.34	34.67

Theses results were subjected to analyses of variance (F-tests) within each demographic group. Only within the group concerning the level of German, borderline significance could be determined: $F = 3.58$ at $p < .067$.

Table 3: Sum Correlations between Authenticity and Contribution to Learning:

demographic variable	cases	mean sum	SD	coefficient
level 1	88	192.76	30.18	.5940**
level 2	72	190.63	36.79	.7266**
level 3	23	199.39	46.49	.9467**
male	87	187.10	36.17	.7302**
female	94	198.68	33.33	.6920**
last German class High School	21	198.57	26.92	.6325**
last German class level 1	139	193.51	37.09	.7469**
last German class level 2	4	206.25	16.94	.9746*
major language	12	212.92	40.95	.8103**
major polisci, bus.,hist.	43	187.02	39.21	.7192**
major chem., engin.	25	185.88	33.60	.7773**
major other	95	193.51	32.07	.6560**
last grade A,AB	82	196.95	35.68	.6494**
last grade B,BC,C	76	192.00	34.16	.7936**
last grade D,F	5	182.80	30.70	.8984**
travel none	113	189.19	32.87	.7054**
travel 1 month or less	53	196.45	37.09	.7171**
travel 1 year or less	13	221.15	25.41	.7432**
travel more than 1 year	5	162.80	41.63	.3041 (n.s.)
age 18 -	15	193.67	22.56	.7324**
age 23 -	129	191.57	36.49	.7487**
age 23 +	38	196.26	34.97	.6429**

Positive correlations between perceived authenticity and contributions to language learning occurred at statistically significant levels in all demographic groups, with exception of the lengthy travel (more than one year) group. The deviating findings for this group need to be noted because they recur in subsequent correlative analyses. In general, all types of learners tend to find language learning materials more useful the more authentic they appear to them.

Moreover, a t-test revealed a statistically significant variance in ratings of contributions between genders, with males assigning higher scores on contribution to learning.

Table 4: Sum Correlations between Authenticity and Ease or Difficulty

demographic variable	cases	mean sum	SD	coefficient
level 1	88	159.89	36.29	-.1315
level 2	71	153.41	39.39	.1585
level 3	23	143.87	30.82	-.0386
male	87	156.36	32.21	-.0330
female	93	154.83	41.57	.0215
last German class High School	21	155.33	23.61	-.0221
last German class level 1	138	154.36	39.65	.0727
last German class level 2	4	143.75	37.88	.1615
major language	12	144.92	64.71	.2371
major polisci etc.	43	147.19	30.48	.1294
major chem etc.	25	156.60	31.70	-.3116
major other	94	160.09	36.25	-.0481
last grade A,AB	81	158.47	38.00	-.1254
last grade B,BC,C	76	149.38	37.31	.2014
last grade D,F	5	151.00	19.96	-.6554

travel none	112	156.38	34.38	-.0539
travel 1 month -	53	150.38	32.69	-.1557
travel 1 year -	13	157.62	68.97	.6250*
travel more than 1 year	5	170.40	33.77	.9576*
age 18 -	15	152.20	21.02	-.1477
age 23 -	129	155.95	32.58	-.0524
age 23+	38	153.08	54.12	.0724

A good number of negative correlations between the rating of authenticity and difficulty were found, although none of them were statistically significant. This may indicate that learners do not necessarily find more authentic texts also more difficult.

There were no significant positive correlations between authenticity and difficulty in any demographic group, with the exception of the more experienced travel groups (starting at travel of more than a month). Among, these there appears to be a progressive trend to consider authentic situations more difficult, the longer the visit to the target language country. Thus, extensive experience abroad does not seem to reduce but rather to increase the perception of authentic situations as difficult. Several reasons may be assumed: (a.) The students may have gone abroad unprepared and had thus experienced culture and language shock. (b.) Well-traveled students can more fully appreciate the skills required for dealing with authentic situations. The former argument is supported by the fact that no significant positive correlation (On the contrary, a (non-significant) negative correlation was determined.) was found for very good students or students at advanced levels. In turn, this indicates that experienced travelers did not constitute a significant contingent in either of these more proficient groups, which leads us to the conclusion that the well-traveled students in fact are not necessarily the linguistically further advanced ones. Exposure to a target language environment without a certain minimal level of already attained proficiency may thus make learners more reluctant rather than more willing to interact with authentic materials.

In combination with the finding that for well-traveled students no significant correlation was found between authenticity and perceived contribution to learning, there is strong indication that extensive exposure to the target language in a target language environment, without adequate preparation, may lead to frustration.

Finally, no statistically significant differences were found with regard to the rating of ease within demographic groups on the basis of F- and t-tests.

Table 5: Sum Correlations between Authenticity and Anxiety or Enjoyment

demographic variable	cases	mean sum	SD	coefficient
level 1	86	170.48	34.35	.1743
level 2	68	174.46	40.73	.3445*
level 3	23	183.35	36.35	.6291**
males	84	169.65	34.81	.3554**
females	91	177.46	39.31	.2454*
last German class High School	21	173.62	26.82	.3105
last German class level 1	134	175.02	39.46	.2934**
last German class level 2	4	183.00	34.60	.6374
major language	11	196.82	55.72	.5841
major polisci etc.	42	174.17	29.04	.3230*
major chem. etc.	25	169.72	28.63	.4914*
major other	91	171.29	39.40	.1841
last grade A,AB	79	178.24	36.26	.4771**
last grade B,BC,C	73	172.45	39.19	.1005
last grade D,F	5	160.20	23.45	.8256
travel none	109	167.59	37.60	.2141*
travel 1 month -	52	181.81	30.18	.4320**
travel 1 year -	12	213.00	27.84	.4326
travel 1 year +	5	132.40	21.87	-.8988*
age 18 -	15	189.60	34.79	.1466
age 23 -	128	173.14	32.57	.4035**
age 23 +	34	169.65	51.64	.2132

1. The more advanced students are, the more enjoyable they find working with authentic materials: a significant correlation between ratings of authenticity and enjoyment was not found for First Year students but was found for Second Year students and even strengthened for students beyond the Second Year. Similarly, in the case of students coming from high school no significant correlation between authenticity and enjoyment was established.
2. A stronger correlation between authenticity and enjoyment was established for males than for females.
3. Besides the non-specific, heterogeneous group "other major", language majors were the only other group whose responses failed to demonstrate a significant correlation between authenticity and enjoyment. This finding is rather counter-intuitive but may indicate an appreciation of didactization of materials on part of language majors.
4. When analyzed according to grade, a significant positive correlation was found only for the best students. Nevertheless, a strong, albeit not significant (perhaps because of the small number of subjects), correlation was also established for the poorest students. Perhaps these students represent a student population which is highly concerned with "communication" and things authentic, to the exclusion of accuracy. They may enjoy working with authentic texts, despite their lack of academic success. By comparison, the best students may enjoy interacting with authentic texts because of or in addition to their ability to do so with a high level of accuracy.

Average students, on the other hand, for whom a minute and statistically not significant correlation was determined may take an intermediate and more tentative position towards authentic materials: Like very good students, they may be concerned with accuracy. But unlike very good students, they may not be able to maintain a minimal level of accuracy when dealing with authentic materials and unlike very poor students this realization may prevent average students from desiring to interact in authentic situations.

5. As discussed before, an increase in travel experience appears to parallel a decrease the enjoyment of authentic materials, with the exception of an initial rise in enjoyment from the no travel to the short travel (less than a month) group. As a matter of fact, for the longest travel group (more than one month), a significant negative correlation has been established. Moreover, an analysis of variance indicated a statistically significant difference in the ratings of enjoyment by subjects of different travel experience ($F = 4.756$; $p < .05$).
6. Traditional age students (18-23) were the only age group for whom a significant positive correlation was found between authenticity and enjoyment. While this may be indicative of a general trend, it may also have to do with the small number of subjects surveyed in the non-traditional age groups.
7. Analyses of variance (F-tests) indicated marginally significant differences in the ratings of enjoyment according to the level of German ($F = 3.66$; $p < 0.7$) and according to the students' s majors ($F = 3.27$; $p < .08$).

Variation among all demographic groups (main effect) was highly significant at $F = 7.022$; $p < .01$)

Summary

Correlative analyses according to demographic groups have shown, among other findings, that (a.) generally speaking, more authentic materials are considered more valuable with regard to language learning; (b.) more authentic materials are not necessarily considered more difficult; referring to previous findings, this insight may need to be qualified by cautioning that reduced-cue native-generated speech and non-didacticized literary texts may indeed be considered more difficult; (c.) extensive travel to a target language country, most likely without adequate linguistic or cultural preparation, may actually reduce a learner's appreciation of authentic materials; (d.) students who especially enjoy working with authentic materials are probably of traditional college age (18-23), rather advanced, either very successful or poor (the latter perhaps because they value interacting with things authentic over attaining high levels of accuracy), and more likely male than female; and (e.) males seem more appreciative of authentic materials than are females: males indicated a statistically significant stronger belief in authentic materials' contribution to language learning and statistically significant correlations between levels of authenticity and enjoyment were more pronounced for males than for females

4. Factor Analysis: Statistical Factors Underlying Authenticity, Contribution to Language Learning, Ease or Difficulty, and Anxiety or Enjoyment

In order to determine whether the same statistically generated factors influence ratings on authenticity, contribution to language learning, ease, and enjoyment, the entire set of data (all 212 items) was subjected to a factor analysis. Because 12 (non-statistical; see beginning of the paper) factors of authenticity had been suggested, 12 statistical factors were generated. The analysis was repeated with 4 and 6 factors respectively, which resulted in very similar patterns. This suggests that indeed a multitude of factors (approximating 12) influence ratings of authenticity, contribution to language learning, ease or difficulty, and anxiety or enjoyment. Only the analyses based on 12 factors is reported here (see Table 6).

Table 6: Factor Analysis by 12 Statistical Factors

item	authenticity	contribution	ease	enjoyment
1	1	1	2	x
2	x	1	2,3,8	1
3	x	x	3	1
4	x	x	2,3	1
5	1	1	2	1
6	1	1	2,3	1,3
7	x	1,5,9	2	1
8	8,9	1,4,5	2,3	1,3
9	x	1,4,5,10	2,3	1,9
10	x	1,4,5	2,3	1,3
11	1,3	1	2,5	1,3
12	4	1,8	2	1
13	1,3,5	1,5	2	1,3
14	4,11	1,7,8	2	1,3,8
15	1,3	1	2	1,3
16	1	1	2	1,3
17	1	1	2	1,3
18	1,4	1	2	1,3
19	1,3	1,6	2,3	1,3
20	1	1	2	1,3
21	1	1	2	1,3
22	1,12	1	2	1,3
23	4	1	2	1
24	1,4	1	2	1,3
25	4	1,4	2	1
26	4	1,4	2,3	1
27	3	1,6	2	1
28	4	1	2	1
29	1,3	1	2	1
30	1	1	2	1

31	1,3	1	2	1,4
32	1,3	1	2	1,3
33	4	1,4	2	1,3
34	3,4,9	1,4	2,3	1,3
35	1,3	1,3	2,3	1,5
36	4	1,12	2	1
37	1,3	1	2	3,5
38	1,6	1	2	1,3
39	1,5	1	2	3
40	1,4	1	2	1,3
41	1,6	1	2	1
42	1	1	2	1
43	1,7	1	2	1,8
44	1	1,3,6	2	1,4
45	1,3	1,3,6	2	1,3,4
46	1	1,6	2	1,3
47	1,3	1,3,6	2	1,4,5
48	1	1	2	1,4
49	1	1	2	1
50	1	1	2	1
51	1,3,5	1	2	1
52	1	1	2,12	1
53	1,4	1	2	1,5

1. Ratings on ease or difficulty are determined by a factor completely different from factors influencing ratings of authenticity, contribution to learning, and anxiety or enjoyment. Factor 2 appears in each scenario rated for ease , with the exception of scenario 3, and in none of the situation rated for authenticity, contribution to learning, or enjoyment

2. The second most common factor affecting rating of ease is factor 3 which appears in the following scenarios: 2,4,6,8,9,10 (reading, lack of intent authenticity); 19,26 (native inception, cultural orientation); 34,35 (learner inclusiveness). The same factor appears in ratings: (a.) on authenticity in scenarios 11,13,15 (medium authenticity, native inception, cultural orientation); 19,27,29; 31,32,34,35 (reading, native inception except for 34); 37 (which contains the most

suggested non-statistical factors); 45,47 (immediacy, currency, initiative authenticity); 51 (source authenticity); (b.) on contribution to language learning in scenarios 35 (reading a letter by a native speaker); 44/45/47 (watching the news; currency & learner-initiative); and (c.) on anxiety or enjoyment in scenarios 6,8,10 (reading a menu in order to learn vocabulary; learner-initiative; linguistic orientation); 11,13,14,15,16,17,18 (encompassing a series of scenarios which relate to reduced-cue listening, with the exception of the scenario in which the learner is being consciously accommodated); 19,20,21,22,24 (listening to and reading a transcript of a recording of a weather forecast); 32,33,34 (reading a non-initiated letter); 37,38,39,40 (encompassing all scenarios relating to listening to directions); and 45,46 (watching current news with a pedagogical intent).

3. The most common factor in the authenticity, contribution to language learning, and anxiety or enjoyment is 1, which appears in all scenarios except, for authenticity: 2,3,4,7,8,9,10; 12,14; 23,25,26,27,28; 33,34,36; for contribution: 3,4; and for enjoyment: 1; 37,39.

4. Table 7 shows the number of scenarios which share at least one factor between any two of their rating aspects (authenticity, contribution, ease, enjoyment).

Table 7: Number of Items With At Least One Factor In Common:
Numbers in parentheses indicate duplication of numbers also reported elsewhere.

	authenticity	contribution	ease	enjoyment
authenticity	na	43	3	33
contribution	(43)	na	1	48
ease	(1)	(1)	na	5
enjoyment	(33)	(48)	(5)	na

Ratings on contribution to language learning and anxiety or enjoyment contained the most items with at least one shared statistically generated factor (48), followed by ratings on authenticity and contribution to language learning (43), ratings on authenticity and anxiety or enjoyment (33), finally trailed by ratings on ease or difficulty and enjoyment (5); ratings on ease or difficulty and authenticity (3), and ratings on ease or difficulty and contribution (1).

In sum, (a.) Learners view authenticity and contribution to learning as dependent on similar factors, and to a somewhat lesser extent, they also view authenticity as being grounded on similar factors as enjoyment. (b.) Foremost, learners rate contribution to language learning and anxiety

or enjoyment based on similar factors. In other words, learners like what they think helps them succeed. (c.) Ease has little to do with enjoyment, even less with authenticity and least with perceived contribution to learning. This insight needs to be appreciated with the previous finding, namely that in the correlational analyses, only one significant correlations was found between authenticity and ease or difficulty.

In conclusion, learners do not appear to enjoy materials or situations because they are easy. They judge ease and contributions to learning on different grounds, and finally, they do not consider authentic situations or materials as innately difficult.

5. Finally, the factor analysis did not generate a distribution of factors as suggested in the beginning of this paper, particularly in the key describing the presence of certain authenticity factors in the different scenarios. Apparently, this divergence is due to a conflict between: (a.) the suggested non-statistical authenticity factors contained in each scenario remaining constant, independent of the aspect (authenticity etc.) being rating in each cycle and (b.) the fact that different statistical factors influence ratings in each of the four rating cycles, especially with regard to authenticity, contribution to learning, and anxiety or enjoyment on one hand and ease or difficulty on the other. Thus, a general prediction of how the presence of certain (non-statistical) authenticity factors will affect ratings in the various cycle so far remains elusive.

In order to examine the extreme conclusion, namely that the initially suggested authenticity factors are altogether invalid, I compared in pairs scenarios which varied by only one authenticity factor.

5. Comparison of Factor Effects in Paired Scenarios

Table 8 shows (1) Whether two given scenarios, differing in only one authenticity factor receive statistically significant different ratings in (a.) authenticity, (b.) contribution to language learning, (c.) ease or difficulty, and (d.) anxiety and enjoyment. (2) How many authenticity factors are present in the particular scenarios: only scenarios with an identical number of authenticity factors were compared, with the exception of 41 and 43 in which the distinctive factor was the presence or absence of authenticity factor 2 (currency); and (3) which factor leads to higher ratings: the column entitled factor opposition lists the factor present in the scenario shown first (e.g. factor 5 in scenario 2), followed by the factor present in the scenario shown second (e.g. factor 7 in scenario 3); both factors are related to each other by the symbols < (the factor on the right is associated with higher ratings than the factor on the left), and conversely, >. These relationships reflect ratings on authenticity only. Whenever ratings on contribution to learning, ease or enjoyment show the opposite effect (e.g. 5>7 for authenticity but 5>7 for enjoyment) the t-value in this category is preceded by **&**.

Levels of statistical significance are shown as follows: *** = p< .001, ** = p<.01, * = p<.05, and (*) = p<.06 to .07. The letters (ns) stand for "not significant".

Table 8: Paired Factor Effects

scenario	factor opposition	authenticity	contrib.	ease	enjoyment
7 factors					
2/3	5>7	ns	ns	ns	&ns
6 factors					
47/48	12>11	ns	ns	2.36*	ns
5 factors					
5/4	5>10	ns	9.00***	4.14***	&ns
13/15	5>8	ns	2.83**	3.79***	&2.37**
45/44	1>12	ns	&ns	&ns	&ns
4 factors					
6/7	9>12	4.38***	3.78***	2.37*	ns
11/14	3>14	4.63***	&ns	4.86***	&2.98***
16/17	4>12	5.16***	4.83***	3.40***	ns
16/14	8>5	4.63***	2.17*	2.65**	2.04*
42/46	10>1	2.60**	2.57**	ns	ns
3 factors					
24/28	12>6	2.13**	&1.82(*)	&ns	&2.08*
2 factors					
26/23	12>5	2.13*	ns	&3.78***	&1.90(*)
27/26	6>4	5.31***	2.97***	ns	ns
31/36	4>10	4.58***	3.64***	3.69***	ns
factor presence/absence					
41/43	-2/+2	ns	ns	ns	ns

1. The presence of one factor over another indeed makes a statistically significant difference in many paired items. Therefore, the extreme conclusion, namely that the initially suggested authenticity factors are invalid must be rejected.

2. However, it appears impossible to predict the precise effects of a particular factor on ratings of authenticity, contribution to learning, ease or difficulty, or anxiety or enjoyment. The occurrence of variations in factor effect may be suggested along the following lines:
(a.) the number of factors: For ratings of authenticity, individual factors appear to become effective only in situations containing 4 factors or less, while statistically significant effects were found for ease up to a situation with 6 factors. Also, while factor 12 seems to lead to lower ratings of authenticity in situations containing 4 factors, it appears to yield higher ratings in situations containing 3 or for factors. As a matter of fact, if one attempted to establish a hierarchy of factors according to how likely they are to raise a situation's rating on authenticity, one would stumble
over contradictions because of that (see: 4 factors: 4>12 but 2 and 3 factors:
12>6 with 6>4). Finally, the number of factors present seems to have little to do with factor effects in enjoyment.
(b.) the aspect rated: While ratings on contribution to learning and difficulty or ease show reversed factor effects (relative to authenticity) only in one statistically significant instance each, ratings on enjoyment yield such significant opposition in 4 comparisons.

In sum, the authenticity factors initially suggested are effective in the sense that they contribute to different ratings on authenticity, contribution to learning, difficulty or ease, and anxiety or enjoyment. However, the exact nature of these factor effects cannot be separated from the contextual environment (type and number of other factors present in a given scenario and the aspect which is being rated) in which the factors are embedded.

Summary

The following insights were gained:
1. Authenticity factors such as immediacy, currency, medium authenticity, native inception, native reception, cue authenticity, intent authenticity, learner inclusiveness, source authenticity, initiative authenticity, setting authenticity, and cultural (goal) orientation were shown to exercise a measurable influence over ratings of a given scenario on authenticity, contribution to language learning, ease or difficulty, and anxiety or enjoyment. The specific effects of these factors, however , vary by the number and nature of other authenticity factors present in a scenario as well as by the aspect (authenticity etc.) on which the scenario is being evaluated.

Finally, as shown in the extremely high scores on ratings of authenticity, contribution to learning, and enjoyment, native inception (being produced by native speakers) may be one factors which generally contributes to positive reactions to materials and situations. However, as shown in the effects produced by the other suggested authenticity factors, native inception is not the only important issue. Conversely, native reception (produced for native speakers) failed to show such positive effects. While it did not yield negative ones either, it appears that learners are more skeptical of including this factor, which in turn would doubtlessly exclude them, in definitions of authenticity.

2. Based on item-by-item correlations, mean sum correlations and a factor analysis, issues of perceived authenticity and difficulty are completely independent of each other, with the exception of listening to native speakers under reduced-cue circumstances (mainly a lack of visual support) and extensive literary discourse without didactization. In contrast, ratings of authenticity correlate highly with ratings of contributions to learning, and to a slightly lesser extent to ratings of enjoyment. A factor analysis has also shown that similar factors influencing ratings on contribution to learning and enjoyment. Few factors were shared by ratings of difficulty on one hand and of enjoyment, authenticity, and contribution to learning (in descending order) on the other.

In total, learners appreciate authentic materials as conducive to language learning, (perhaps therefore) enjoy working them and do not innately associate a high degree of authenticity with a high degree of difficulty.

3. Correlations between authenticity on one hand and contribution to language learning, ease or difficulty, and anxiety or enjoyment on the other, do vary according to demographic group, as do, to a lesser extent, the scenarios' ratings on authenticity (by level of German), contribution to language learning (gender), and anxiety or enjoyment (by academic major & level of German) themselves.

Specifically, males (more strongly than females) are enthusiastic about the use of authentic materials, as are more advanced, very successful (but also very poor, probably for different reasons), and traditional-college-age learners. Learners with extensive experience of travel to a target language country, most likely particularly those without adequate prior preparation, constitute the group which reacts with the most frustration and least appreciation when confronted with authentic materials and situations.

These insights may be applied when selecting and using authentic materials or situations in foreign language teaching, primarily according to the following criteria:

1. Materials or situations do not appear authentic to learners simply because they are produced "by native speakers for native speakers". While native inception is important, native reception appears less so, and overall a variety of other factors also play a role. Moreover, the level of

authenticity cannot be predicted strictly based on the presence of certain authenticity factors and the absence of others. Perhaps, as shown in the paired item effects, the greater the number of authenticity factors in a given situation, the more diminished the effects of individual factors become.

2. Learners are not necessarily afraid to engage with authentic materials and in authentic situations. On the contrary, many see great advantages in and derive enjoyment from doing so. However, the provision of a full range of cues (auditory and visual, including written language when appropriate) , and some didactization of extensive discourse appear very beneficial.

3. Learners may have different expectations and needs in dealing with authentic materials and situations, depending on demographic variables such as gender, level of advancement, success in the classroom, and travel experience to target language countries.

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Appendix A: Student Questionnaire Items

reading a menu

1./54./107./160. reading a German menu in a German restaurant in Germany (you intend to order a dish)

2. /55./108./161. reading a German menu in a German restaurant in Germany (you don't intend to order a dish,; you are just looking at it out of curiosity)

3. /56./109./162. reading a German menu in a German restaurant (e.g. Essenhaus) in Madison (you intend to order a dish)

4. /57./110./163. reading a German menu in a German restaurant (e.g. Essenhaus) in Madison (you don't intend to order a dish,; you are just looking at it out of curiosity)

5./58./111./164. reading a real German menu from a real German restaurant in German class in order to learn about German food and eating culture

6./59./112./165. reading a real German menu from a real German restaurant in German class in order to learn vocabulary

7./60./113./166. reading a German menu from a real German restaurant which is printed in a textbook in order to learn about German food and eating culture

8./61./114./167. reading a German menu from a real German restaurant which is printed in a textbook in order to learn vocabulary

9./62./115./168. reading a simulated German menu which is printed in a textbook in order to learn about German food and eating culture

10./63./116./169. reading a simulated German menu which is printed in a textbook in order to learn vocabulary

listening to a conversation about the weather

11./64./117./170. listening to an audio tape of 2 German speakers (e.g. speaking about the weather or a similar topic) who aren't aware that they have been taped

12./65./118./171. listening to an audio tape of 2 German speakers (e.g. speaking about the weather or a similar topic) who make an effort to speak clearly and slowly for your benefit

13. /66./119./172. listening to 2 German speakers, speaking to each other on the phone (e.g. about the weather) who are unaware that they are being listened to

14./67./120./173. listening to 2 German speakers speaking to each other on the phone (e.g. about the weather) who are obviously trying to make you understand what they are saying (i.e. they speak slowly and very cearly)

15./68./121./174. listening to a native speaker who speaks German to you on the phone (e.g. about the weather), because you are genuinely interested in the topic

16./69./122./175. listening to a native speaker who speaks German to you on the phone (e.g. about the weather) because you want to practice your German

17./70./123./176. listening to a non-native speaker who speaks German to you on the phone (e.g. about the weather) because you are genuinely interested in the topic

18./71./124./177. listening to a non-native speaker who speaks German to you on the phone (e.g. about the weather) because you want to practice your German

19./72./125./178. listening to a recording of a current German weather forecast for Germany in Germany shortly before planning a hike in the Alps

20./73./126./179. listening to a recording of a current German weather forecast for Germany in Germany because you want to practice your German listening skills

21./74./127./180. listening to a recording of a current German weather forecast for Germany but in Madison because you are about to depart for Germany

22./75./128./181. listening to a recording of a current Gernan weather forecast for Germany but in Madison because you want to practice your German listening skills

23./76./129./182. listening to a recording of a non-current German weather forecast for Germany but in Madison because you want to practice your listening skills

24./77./130./183. reading a printed version (transcript) of a German conversation between two native speakers (e.g. about the weather or a similar topic)

25./78./131./184. reading a printed version (transcript) of a German conversation between two non-native speaker s (e.g. about the weather)

26./79./132./185. reading a printed version (transcript) of a German conversation between a native speaker and a non-native speaker (e.g. about the weather)

27./80./133./186. watching a video tape of 2 German speakers (e.g. about the weather) and gesturing; the people obviously are unaware of being taped

28./81./134./187. watching a video tape of 2 German speakers (e.g. about the weather) and gesturing; the people obviously are trying to help you understand: they encunciate very clearly, speak slowly and gesture overtly

29./82./135./188. listening to a native speaker responding in German to your question about what the weather will be like because you are planning a hike in the Alps

30./83./136./189. listening to a native speaker responding in German to your question about what the weather will be like, just to make small talk (you really don't care about the weather and neither does the native speaker)

reading a letter

31./84./137./190. reading a German letter written to you by a native speaker as part of a course assignment

32./85./138./191. reading a German letter written to you by a native speaker friend of yours who plans to visit you in Madison

33./86./139./192. reading a German letter written to you by a non-native speaker class-mate as part of a course assignment

34./87./140./193. reading a German letter written to you by a non-native speaker class-mate to invite you to go to Kaffeestunde (conversation circle)

35. /88./141./194. reading a German letter written to you by a native speaker in response to a letter you have written

36./89./142./195. reading a German letter written to you by a non-native speaker in response to a letter you have written.

listening to directions

37./90./143./196. listening to a native speaker in Germany, responding in German to your question where you can find the Bahnhof (train station); you asked the question because you need to catch a train

38./91./144./197. listening to a native speaker in Germany, responding in German to your question where you can find the Bahnhof (train station); you asked the question only to practice your German;

39./92./145./198. listening to a native speaker of German who lives in Madison, responding in German to your question how to get to Memorial Library; you asked the question because you need to check out some books and have no idea where the library is;

40./93./146./199. listening to a native speaker of German who lives in Madison, responding in German to your question how to get to Memorial Library; you asked the question only to practice your German;

watching the news

41./94./147./200. watching a video recording of old German news in German class because your teacher thinks it's a good idea

42./95./148./201. watching a video recording of current German news in German class because you want to improve your German

43./96./149./202. watching a video recording of current German news in German class because the teacher thinks it's a good thing to do

44. /97./150./203. watching a video recording of current German news in German class because you are really interested in the stories

45./98./151./204. watching current German news on satellite TV (no recording) in German class because you want to improve your German

46./99./152./205. watching current German news on satellite TV (no recording) in German class because the teacher thinks it's a good thing to do

47./100./153./206. watching current German news on satellite TV (no recording) in German class because you are really interested in the stories

48./101./154./207. watching current German news in Germany because yoy want to improve your German while you are there

49./102./155./208. watching current German news in Germany because my host family thinks it's a good thing to do

50./103./156./209. watching current German news in Germany because you are really interested in the stories

reading a literary story

51./104./157./210. reading a German literary story originally written for the entertainment of Germans, printed in a book for Germans

52./105./158./211. reading a German literary story written for the entertainment of Germans but printed in a textbook, without an accompanying glossary & explanations

53./106./159./212. reading a German literary story written for the entertainment of Germans but printed in a textbook, with an accompanying glossary & explanations

Appendix B: Key to Distribution of Suggested Authenticity Factors in Scenarios

items				**authenticity factors**
auth.	**contr.**	**ease**	**joy**	
1	54	107	160	4,5,7,8,9,10,11,12
2	55	108	161	4,5,8,9,10,11,12
3	56	109	162	4,7,8,9,10,12
4	57	110	163	4,8,9,10,12
5	58	111	164	4,5,8,9,12
6	59	112	165	4,5,8,9
7	60	113	166	4,5,8,12
8	61	114	167	4,5,8,
9	62	115	168	12
10	63	116	169	none
11	64	117	170	3,4,5,12
12	65	118	171	4,5
13	66	119	172	1,3,4,5,12
14	67	120	173	1,3,4,5
15	68	121	174	1,3,4,8,12
16	69	122	175	1,3,4,8
17	70	123	176	1,3,8,12
18	71	124	177	1,3,8
19	72	125	178	2,3,4,5,7,10,11,12

20	73	126	179	2,4,5,10,11
21	74	127	180	2,4,5,7,10,12
22	75	128	181	2,4,5,10
23	76	129	182	4,5
24	77	130	183	4,5,12
25	78	131	184	12
26	79	132	185	4,12
27	80	133	186	6,12
28	81	134	187	4,5,6
29	82	135	188	1,3,6,7,10,11,12
30	83	136	189	1,3,6,10,12
31	84	137	190	4,(8)
32	85	138	191	4,7,(8),12
33	86	139	192	(8)
34	87	140	193	7,(8),12
35	88	141	194	4,(8),10
36	89	142	195	(8),10
37	90	143	196	(1,4,6),7,(8,10),11,12
38	91	144	197	(1,4,6),(8,10),11
39	92	145	198	(1,4,6),7,(8,10),12
40	93	146	199	(1,4,6),(8,10)
41	94	147	200	(4,5)
42	95	148	201	2,(4,5),10
43	96	149	202	2,(4,5)
44	97	150	203	2,(4,5),10,12
45	98	151	204	1,2,(4,5),10
46	99	152	205	1,2,(4,5)
47	100	153	206	1,2,(4,5),10,12
48	101	154	207	1,2,(4,5),10,11
49	102	155	208	1,2,(4,5),11
50	103	156	209	1,2,(4,5),10,11,12
51	104	157	210	(4,5),9,12
52	105	158	211	(4,5),12

53 106 159 212 (4,5) 32